

# RAMADHAN

*Time to Fix the Body & Mind*

*Dr Musharraf Hussain*

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# RAMADHAN:

TIME TO FIX THE BODY & MIND

رمضان: الوقت لإصلاح الجسم والعقل

Reflections on Ramadhan, Quran and Fasting

By Musharraf Hussain

Ramadhan: Time To Fix the Body & Mind  
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# **ALLAH WANTS EASE FOR YOU NOT HARDSHIP**



Allah wants what is easy for you, not what is hard. It's a challenging phrase in the context of fasting. It is one of the most difficult forms of worship, where the worshipper must stop eating, drinking and marital relations. Not easy at all. In the long summer days in the 45-degree Celsius temperature of Islamabad or Makkah that's definitely not easy. So, why does Allah say He wants ease for us and not hardship?

Among many human hungers, food, drink, and marital intimacy are the most powerful. Fashion designers, fast foods and other industries have developed to exploit these human impulses. They understand how they can attract people. But a believer is told by the Lord to quit them temporarily and they submit and stop eating and drinking for 13 to 15 hours in the day. That's obedience, devotion and piety. The Messenger (peace be upon him) said, "[Paradise is enclosed by difficulties whilst the Hellfire is enclosed by desires](#)" (Muslim).

We wait eagerly for the month of Ramadhan to arrive because the Messenger (peace be upon him) said: "[If you knew the real worth of this month, you would want the whole year to be Ramadhan](#)" (Ibn Khuzaymah).

## **The Excellence of Ramadhan**

Describing this prosperous time of worship, Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Messenger (peace be upon him) said, “The blessed month of Ramadhan has dawned. During this month Allah has prescribed fasting for you, the gates of Heaven are opened and the gates of Hell are closed. The rebellious devils are chained. There is a night in this month that is better than a thousand months, whoever misses it is indeed deprived of enormous blessings” (Bukhari).

In another hadith Abu Hurayrah reports the blessed Messenger (peace be upon him) as having said: “My people have been blessed with five special favours in Ramadhan: (1) The breath of the fasting person is better than the smell of musk; (2) The angels pray for them; (3) Paradise is prepared for them; (4) The mischievous devils are chained; (5) The fasting people are forgiven” (Ahmad).

Allah is the most generous. He gives without asking and gives so abundantly, subhanallah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) in telling us about the five special favours of Allah in this month, first mentions that the bad breath coming from the mouth of the fasting person is better than musk, a valuable perfume. This ‘bad breath’ is the result of the changed metabolism of the body. Since blood sugar levels fall during fasting the body begins to use stored fats. A by-product of fat-metabolism are ketone

bodies, which are volatile and smelly substances and they appear in the breath of the fasting person.

But what does it mean to say ‘this bad breath is dearer to Allah than musk’? The scholars have explained this in several ways. It could mean one of the following:

- (1) In the Hereafter Allah will grant him a perfume, which will be better than musk.
- (2) On the Day of Judgement, as people will rise from the dead, they will smell of perfume.
- (3) It could mean that the smell of their breath is better in the sight of Allah than that of musk, simply because Allah loves his obedient and fasting slave.

What a beautiful way to express love. Fasting is the gate to all other devotions; the heart is illuminated as the desire to serve and worship Allah grows.

Since fasting is no ordinary act of worship, Allah says in a hadith qudsi: “All the deeds of the son of Adam are increased in value from ten to seven hundred times except for fasting, since it is for me alone, I shall reward my servant as I please” (Muslim).

The second blessing for the fasting person is the prayer of the angels. Ahadith tell us “when Allah loves one of His servants, He tells Jibril so

and so is my beloved, so Jibril loves him too and he proclaims to all the angels that so and so is Allah's beloved. They too begin to love him until his love is implanted in the heart of all the people" (Bukhari).

Another interesting feature of Ramadhan is that 'mischievous devils are chained'. It is a common experience that even in the most Islamic society, sins and crimes are still committed in Ramadhan, although somewhat less than usual – so the question is what is this Hadith getting at?

This apparent dilemma has been variously addressed by the scholars. The first thing is that the Hadith specifies that only mischievous and rebellious devils are chained, suggesting that the 'minor devils' who are numerous remain free to do as they like. Another interesting explanation for some of the evil we see in Ramadhan is that the devils are indeed chained but men who have acquired the characteristics of the devil, by living a life full of sin, are free to roam amongst us.

In Ramadhan, the habit of the Prophet (peace be upon him), the companions and the saints, was to spend more time in prayer and supplication. A tradition says that the angels of the Mighty Throne are told to leave and say "Ameen" for the prayers of the devotee. This is an indication that the prayer will be accepted, however, despite this Divine promise, our faith sometimes falters and we do not put our trust in Allah as we should, and demand to see our prayer fulfilled immediately there and then. This is the hasty and rash nature of man.

The next Hadith explains the Divine wisdom that operates in delaying the fulfilment of our prayers. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “When a Muslim asks for something, as long as it is not severing a relationship or a sin, one of the following three things happen: either he gets what he asked for, or an impending calamity is diverted from him, or he is credited with reward for the Hereafter” (Ahmad).

In another Hadith it is mentioned that: “On the Day of Judgement, a person will be reminded about all his prayers and how they were accepted or a calamity was diverted from him and some prayers which were not fulfilled in his lifetime, he will be given enormous reward for them. When he sees the reward for his unfulfilled prayer, he will wish that none of his prayers were ever fulfilled in the world so that he could reap their reward” (Muslim).

### **A month of kind-heartedness, forgiveness and liberation from Hell.**

Salman Al Farsi reported, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) delivered a sermon on the last day of Sha‘ban:

“People, there comes upon you now a great and most blessed month, wherein lies a night greater in worth than a thousand months. The fasting during this month is made compulsory and the extra prayers by night are optional. Whosoever tries drawing near to Allah by performing any

virtuous deed in this month, for him shall be such reward as if he had performed any obligatory duty at any other time of the year. And whosoever performs any obligatory duty, for him shall be the reward of 70 times such duty at any other time of the year.

This is indeed the month of patience and the reward for true patience is Paradise. It is the month of sympathy with one's fellow men. It is a month wherein a true believer's livelihood is increased. Whosoever feeds a fasting person to break the fast at iftar, for him there will be forgiveness of his sins and emancipation from the fire of Hell and he will receive the reward equal to the fasting person, without that person's reward being diminished in the least."

The companions said: "Not all of us possess the means whereby we can provide enough for a fasting person to break his fast." The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied: "Allah grants the same reward to him who gives a fasting person a single date or a sip of milk or drink of water to break the fast.

This is a month the first part of which brings Allah's mercy, the middle of which brings His forgiveness and the last part of which brings freedom from the fire of Hell. Whosoever lessens the burdens of his servants in this month, Allah will forgive him and free him from Hell. And there are four things you should endeavour to perform in great number, two of which

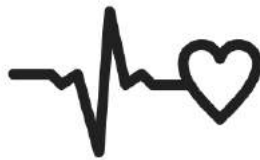
shall be to please your Lord, while the other two shall be those without which you cannot make do.

The first two qualities are to bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah and to ask for forgiveness. And as for the two you cannot do without: ask Allah for Paradise and seek refuge from the Hellfire.

And whosoever gives a fasting Muslim water to drink at iftar, Allah will grant him a drink during the Day of Judgement from the fountain of Muhammad after which he shall never again feel thirsty until he enters Paradise”(Ibn al-Khuzaymah).

Muslims are always joyous at the coming of this blessed month, feeling genuine pleasure as the struggle begins. This spiritual joy and enthusiasm is sadly exploited by the entertainment and marketing industries. Taking advantage of the raised enthusiasm they market all sorts of ‘Islamic goods’ ... we must avoid making Ramadhan a marketplace for spiritual goods.

# **THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF FASTING**



New England Journal of Medicine 2019; 381:2541-51

Effects of Intermittent Fasting on Health, Aging, and Disease

Rafael de Cabo, Ph.D., and Mark P. Mattson, Ph.D.

These are the highlights of the paper, all references from the original paper are in brackets.

**S**tudies in animals and humans have shown that many of the health benefits of intermittent fasting are not simply the result of reduced free-radical production or weight loss. (2-5)

Instead, intermittent fasting elicits evolutionarily conserved, adaptive cellular responses that are integrated between and within organs in a manner that improves glucose regulation, increases stress resistance, and suppresses inflammation.

Preclinical studies consistently show the robust disease-modifying efficacy of intermittent fasting in animal models on a wide range of chronic disorders, including obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancers, and neurodegenerative brain diseases. (3,7-10)

Ketone bodies are not just fuel used during periods of fasting; they are potent signalling molecules with major effects on cell and organ functions. (21)

By influencing these major cellular pathways, ketone bodies produced during fasting have profound effects on systemic metabolism. Moreover, ketone bodies stimulate expression of the gene for brain-derived neurotrophic factor (Fig. 2), with implications for brain health and psychiatric and neurodegenerative disorders. (5)

### **Fasting and Stress Resistance**

Repeated exposure to fasting periods results in lasting adaptive responses that confer resistance to subsequent challenges. Cells respond to intermittent fasting by engaging in a coordinated adaptive stress response that leads to increased expression of antioxidant defences, DNA repair, protein quality control, mitochondrial biogenesis and autophagy, and down-regulation of inflammation (Fig. 3). These adaptive responses to fasting and feeding are conserved across taxa. (10)

### **Effects of Fasting on Health and Aging**

The overall conclusion was that reduced food intake robustly increases the life span. In humans, intermittent-fasting interventions ameliorate

obesity, insulin resistance, dyslipidaemia, hypertension, and inflammation. (33) Intermittent fasting seems to confer health benefits to a greater extent than can be attributed just to a reduction in caloric intake. In one trial, 16 healthy participants assigned to a regimen of alternate day fasting for 22 days lost 2.5% of their initial weight and 4% of fat mass, with a 57% decrease in fasting insulin levels. (34)

### **Physical and Cognitive Effects of Fasting**

Young men who fast daily for 16 hours lose fat while maintaining muscle mass during two months of resistance training. (36) ... More recently, a large, multicentre, randomised clinical trial showed that 2 years of daily caloric restriction led to a significant improvement in working memory. (40)

A multicentre study showed that daily caloric restriction improves many cardiometabolic risk factors in nonobese humans. (46-50)

### **Cardiovascular Disease**

Intermittent fasting improves multiple indicators of cardiovascular health in animals and humans, including blood pressure; resting heart rate; levels of high-density and low-density lipoprotein (HDL and LDL) cholesterol, triglycerides, glucose, and insulin; and insulin resistance. (41,43,47,55)

## **Cancer**

Similarly, intermittent fasting is thought to impair energy metabolism in cancer cells, inhibiting their growth and rendering them susceptible to clinical treatments. (61-63)

intermittent fasting would also be expected to be beneficial in rheumatoid arthritis, and indeed, there is evidence supporting its use in patients with arthritis. (76)

## **Conclusions**

Preclinical studies and clinical trials have shown that fasting has broad-spectrum benefits for many health conditions, such as obesity, diabetes mellitus, cardiovascular disease, cancers, and neurologic disorders.

Although we do not fully understand the specific mechanisms, the beneficial effects of intermittent fasting involve metabolic switching and cellular stress resistance.

# ACTIVITIES I MUST DO DURING RAMADHAN



**H**ere are seven valuable tips that can help you to take full benefit of this ‘Spring of Righteousness’. It offers advice on how to steer clear of the usual errors we commit during this sacred month, preventing us from fully receiving its blessings.

### **1. Embrace the essence of fasting**

The Quran enlightens us about fasting’s true purpose: “Believers fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you so that you may become mindful” (Al-Baqarah:183). Fasting serves as a spiritual discipline, encouraging adherence to Islamic teachings and inspiring a deeper commitment to observing the Shariah. Let this Ramadhan be a journey towards Taqwa, heightened awareness and devout obedience.

### **2. Be spiritually active**

Ramadhan is a time of patience and sympathy with fellow humans, seeking the nearness of Allah Almighty, praying day and night, reciting The Majestic Quran and listening to it. It is described as an intercessor on Judgement Day and a means of atonement for sins. Don’t take this month as a mere ritual.

### **3. Be careful with food**

Fasting is a great spiritual exercise that helps us on our journey to the Lord, however, giving up food sometimes makes us think more about it. This is evident at iftar time; the dinner table becomes a sumptuous banquet. Moderation is the key; “Eat and drink but waste not by

extravagance, certainly Allah does not like people who waste” (Al-A’raf:31).

#### **4. Sleep less and more devotion**

Our sleeping pattern changes as everyone gets up early for suhoor and goes to bed late because of Taraweeh prayer. So, some people end up spending more time in bed. This month is too precious to be wasted like this. Aim to balance your rest with worship and productivity, ensuring you make the most of every blessed moment.

#### **5. Don’t miss Suhoor**

Make sure you wake up and eat something healthy at Suhoor time. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “There is blessing in eating Suhoor; so do not skip it, even if one of you has a sip of water” (Bukhari). Engaging in this pre-dawn meal not only aligns you with the sunnah but also equips your body with the necessary energy to sustain the day’s fast.

#### **6. Make time for Dua**

Prayer or Dua is the believer’s most powerful tool against the attacks of Satan and the ego. It is an expression of humility towards the creator and a submission of dependency on the Almighty Lord. The prayer of the fasting person is accepted at the time of breaking fast. So, take benefit of this opportunity.

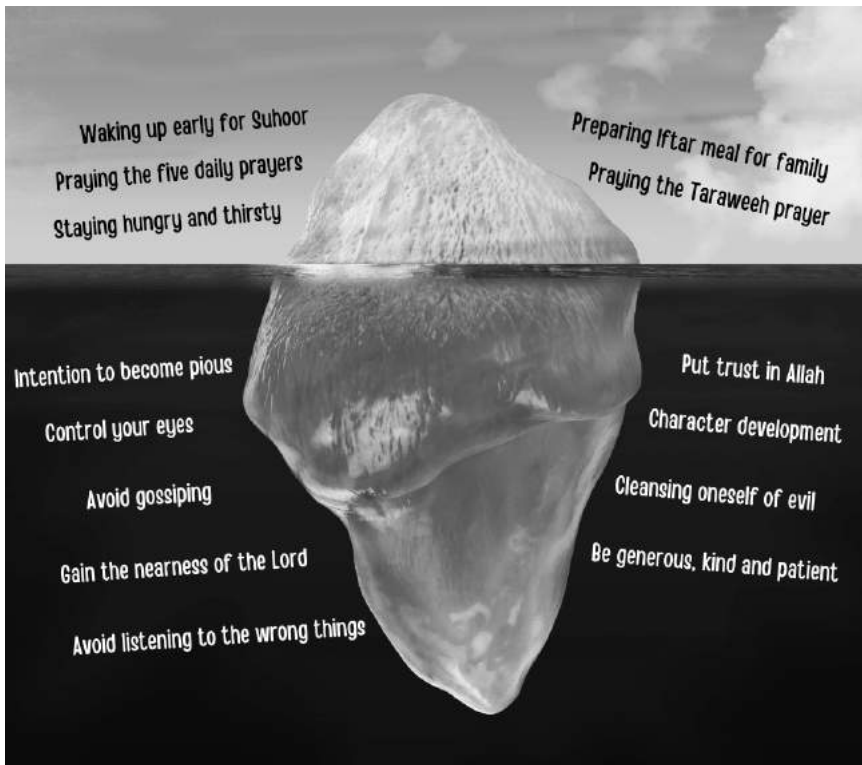
## **7. I'tikaf (The Spiritual Retreat)**

This is when a fasting person stays in the Masjid or women stay in their room at home during the last 10 days of Ramadhan. Aisha (Allah be pleased with her) said, “[The Messenger used to retreat during the last ten days of Ramadhan, he did this regularly and after him, I do it too](#)” (Bukhari). Also, this way you won't miss Layla-tul-Qadr ‘The Night of Power’ as it is better than a thousand months of worship because you will already be in the house of Allah.

# **MAKE YOUR FAST EXTRAORDINARY**



**I**t was Ramadhan and Hasan al-Basri saw a group of people sitting and laughing, he addressed them: “Allah made the month of Ramadhan a racecourse, here His creatures compete in His worship. Some are first and win, others lag and lose...” Let’s explore how we can be the winners this month, with the help of Imam Ghazali, we will learn how to fast like the elite, the chosen ones, the pious.



## **The Iceberg Metaphor**

The Iceberg metaphor nicely represents how most of us view fasting as an ordinary, ritualistic and outward activity. From dawn to sunset, we stop eating, drinking, and having marital relations. But this is just an outward form of fasting that Muslims are familiar with. It is just the bare minimum expected of us and it is just the beginning.

The iceberg metaphor tells us that there is far more going on underneath. That is ‘Extraordinary Fasting’, which means keeping the ears, eyes, tongue, hands and feet free from sin. This includes refraining from seeing, saying, and hearing things that are against the Divine Will. That’s controlling the five senses; no gossiping and no backbiting. It means only eating Halal wholesome food and avoiding overeating at Iftar. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said “Fasting is a shield; so, when you are fasting, don’t use foul language or foolish talk. If someone attacks or insults you, say: I am fasting, I am fasting!” (Ibn Majah).

## **The hidden aspect of fasting**

It is narrated in a hadith “Two Fasting women were so fatigued towards the end of the day, from hunger and thirst, that they were about to collapse. They asked the Messenger (peace be upon him) for permission to break their fast. He (peace be upon him) said: ‘Tell them to vomit in this bowl’. One of them half-filled the bowl with blood and bits of meat, while the other brought up the same so that they filled the whole bowl

between them. The onlookers were astonished. Then the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “These women have been fasting from what Allah made lawful to them and have broken their fast on what Allah made unlawful to them. They sat together and indulged in backbiting, and here is the flesh of the people they slandered” (Ahmad).

The idea of Ramadhan is to see ourselves as worshippers and not consumers. During Ramadhan, our intake should not mirror our usual consumption (2100 calories per day) as in a regular 24-hour cycle. Instead, we should be turning away from the desires of the flesh and looking towards Allah – looking with fear and hope.

## **Grades of Fasting**

Imam Ghazali was a great scholar and saint, he had a seminal influence on medieval European and Muslim scholars, he said there are three grades of fasting:

1. **Ordinary:** This describes the visible aspects of fasting: Refraining from eating, drinking, and abstaining from sexual activities from dawn until sunset. It’s a customary practice familiar to most Muslims globally.
2. **Extraordinary:** This means doing the ordinary whilst also ensuring that the ears, eyes, tongue, hands, feet, and all senses abstain from any form of sin.

3. **Elite:** This form of fasting involves the heart's detachment from trivial concerns and mundane thoughts, focusing solely on Allah, and ignoring all else. For the devout, even a fleeting thought of worldly affairs can disrupt this elite fast.

These are the realities of fasting. If we can try to make our fast extraordinary and resist the ordinary, then we will have advanced this Ramadhan in leaps and bounds. This is the portrayal of Ramadhan as explained by a devout follower: Fasting enhances your discernment, refining your capacity to differentiate between right and wrong, and between truth and falsehood.

# PRAYERS FOR RAMADHAN



## **Prayer of thanks**

Oh Kind, Loving and Caring Lord, we thank you for this wonderful month of Ramadhan, when your kindness flows generously. When you shut the gates of Hell and open the gates of Heaven, making it easy for us to do good and difficult to do wrong.

We thank you for this gift of deliverance. So, Lord, lift my heart and ease my task for me. Untie my tongue, so that people may understand my words.

Make me intelligent and thoughtful Kind Lord, increase me in knowledge.

I have failed in my duty as an obedient servant of yours so, There is no god but you, glory be to you, I was wrong.

I am weak and feeble in my response to you, yet you keep blessing me, the world has sapped my energy left me helpless and hopeless, Lord inspire me to be thankful for the blessings you have granted me and my parents and to do good deeds that please you. By your grace admit me among your righteous servants.

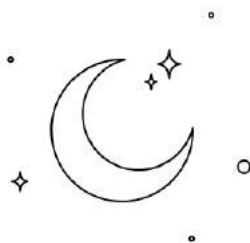
## **Prayer for the family**

Oh Allah, I thank you profusely for the gift of family, Our Lord gives us joy in our spouses and children. Make us good example to those who are god-conscious people.

I frequently fall into the trap of the world, so I plead my Guardian and Protector give us the best in the world and the best in the hereafter and protects us from the punishment of hell.

So often I shout, get angry and get upset, Oh Lord, shower patience on me, makes me stand firm, and help me against my foes.

# WHAT I WILL DO DURING THE LAST 10 DAYS



**A**s we approach the final days of Ramadhan, we eagerly expect the good news of freedom from the fire. How do we spend this blessed and rewarding time? What are the best practices? Here I suggest three Sunnahs that will enrich the spiritual atmosphere of the final days of this Spring of Righteousness.

The beloved Messenger (peace be upon him) said, “[the first ten days of Ramadhan are the days of Allah’s Kindness, the second ten are designated for forgiveness and the last ten for the freedom from Hellfire](#)” (Bukhari).

This hadith reminds us about spiritual progression, nothing stands still, there is upward movement, ascension and rising above the base desires. Our journey through Ramadhan starts with Allah the Loving Lord showing compassion, treating us with care and respect. This switches to forgiveness, overlooking our weaknesses and shortcomings, our sins erased. Now we have the freedom to serve the Lord and His creatures.

Here are four effective and spiritual exercises you can tug into comfortably in the last ten days of Ramadhan.

### **1. Reading the Quran to refresh and revive the heart**

Malik Ibn Dinar a pious scholar who was student of prominent disciples, he said, “People of the Quran, do you know what the Quran does to your

heart? It's like the rain that revives the dead earth." The daily chores and conflicts take their toll on our emotional well-being, study of the Quran is an effective way of refreshing and reviving oneself.

The best way we can achieve a change in our lives, in people around us is to bond with Allah through the Quran. This is how the disciples did it before us. By helping individuals transform their personal relationships with the Quran and live a Quranic lifestyle. We dream of not only contributing to positive change but to kindle a revival in our religious society "This Majestic Quran guides to the straight path it gives good news to believers who perform excellent deeds; they'll have a great reward" (Al-Isra:9).

You know what joy and buzz you get when something sparks hope in you or fills your heart with peace or encourages you. Readers of the Quran tell us about insights they get when reading the Majestic Quran. Often the section they're reading lines up with something happening in their lives. So, whenever you experience one of those 'A-ha' moments share it. You can share all kinds of things from the Quran with your friends.

Here is what I do: Open the Majestic Quran randomly, I read the section in front. I listen to its message, think, and put it on. That's the advice from Allah for me, solution for my problem today. This will free me from fear, nurtures a frame of mind that's Godly and trusts the Lord. Now I can give others that same great feeling.

## **2. Sit I'tikaf**

This is a spiritual retreat, when the fasting person stays in the Masjid or for women to stay in their room at home. Aisha said, “[The Messenger used to retreat during the last ten days of Ramadhan, he did this regularly and after him I do it](#)” (Bukhari).

The retreat is an effective means for spiritual development since you temporarily disassociate from worldly affairs, spending day and night immersed in the remembrance of Allah and meditating. It's a highly charged spiritual state, “when the heart becomes attached to Allah, you get inner peace. The preoccupation with the mundane things of life ceases and absorption in the eternal reality takes its place, and the state is reached in which all fears, hopes and apprehensions are taken over by the love for Him and every thought and feeling is blended with the eagerness to gain His nearness. Devotion to the Almighty is taught instead of devotion to the world, it becomes the provision for the grave where there will be neither a friend nor a helper. This is the lofty purpose of i'tikaf” (Zaad al Maad).

## **3. Look out for the Night of Power**

During the odd nights of the last ten nights, look out for this blessed night. This night is better than a thousand months of worship.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “[Seek Lailat ul-Qadr, night of power among the odd numbered nights of the last ten nights of Ramadhan](#)” (Bukhari). Spending this night in worship, seeking forgiveness and Divine nearness marks the climax of Ramadhan.

#### **4. Give your Zakat and Sadaqah**

Giving your Zakat in Ramadhan holds immense importance as it purifies wealth, fostering a spirit of compassion towards those in need, and strengthens the bond within the community. This act of charity is especially valued during Ramadhan, enhancing the spiritual journey and bringing blessings to both the giver and the recipient.

[Karimia institute](#) has been at the forefront of community development and building trust with the wider society for 30 years – we have an incredible amount of experience, resources, and expertise. It’s what allows us to serve our community and to fulfil our duty of spreading the message of Islam.

Give your Zakat to purify your wealth and let Karimia Institute change lives here at home. Charity begins at home. Our Zakat-applicable projects will have long lasting impact for the Muslim Community and our non-Muslim neighbours.

# HOW I WILL ENGAGE WITH ALLAH'S WORD



**H**ere are three facts about [The Majestic Quran](#) you must know:

1. It's Allah's speech, that is effective and has a life changing message. It's incredibly persuasive and authoritative. So, let it water the deep recesses of your brain.
2. It provides comfort and gives peace of mind in a way that nothing else can do; so its reading is restful and peaceful devotion.
3. It's an easy-to-use guidebook; just try it. The stories are straight forward with simple wakeup calls; instructions to follow are easy; moral values grow your resilience; spiritual ideals raise your hope and closeness to the Lord; social manners enhance relationships with fellow humans.

**Now let's examine why we read the Quran. I read it:**

- To escape the shallowness and flakiness of worldly life into the reality of Allah.
- For healing from the broken relationships and emotional pain.
- For developing empathy and building bridges with others.
- To understand myself better and my purpose in life.
- To feel the intense emotions that it evokes of the life hereafter and the delights of paradise.

- To earn lots of spiritual rewards.

The blessed Messenger (peace be upon him) complained “**My Lord, my people have abandoned the Quran**” (Furqan: 30). What does this abandoning mean? It means to desert, stop using, breakoff as the people of Makkah did, they stopped listening, they refused to believe it; did not practise its teachings despite believing and reading it; denying its judgments and rulings; not paying attention to its meaning and message; not following its advice for overcoming moral and spiritual problems. Some of these are more serious than others, so beware! (Safwat-al Tafsir).

So to avoid being among the Idolators of Makkah you are obliged to study and follow it. Why?

1. It's the world's greatest book for guidance and spiritual formation and prayer.
2. It has bite size stories and passages that are a joy to read. That's what makes The Majestic Quran's translation a meditational experience that's engaging and inspirational.
3. The vivid descriptions of paradisaal delights, raise my hopes, the pithy bullet points for personal improvement are persuasive

My Quran translation makes it accessible with its indigestible bites. Whenever you've got 10 minutes, you can sit down and learn something, it's that simple.

## **How to experience the Quran whilst reading it**

Your thinking will be changed by reading the Word of Allah, the Quran. Then you will notice two things happen:

- a) You know His will for you
- b) You know He is happy with you

Now you will experience the Divine word, confidently as the deputy of Allah, friend of Allah and pious. As we grow up studying the Quran, we learn to live in the light of our new self-image, and we gain new self-worth. Despite the past sins and errors.

The Quran will help you to realise your real worth. It's a collection of sublime Divine guidance, life changing stories about some of the best humans and some wretched people. The Quran has been a trusted source of knowledge and enlightenment since, fourteen centuries.

Each time you read it you will get super advice for moral and spiritual health that will lead to your physical wellbeing. This is no ordinary advice it's from the One who designed the human machine, the One who crafted it and made it perfect. His knowledge about the intricacies and complexities of the molecular world is not derived from microscopes or x-rays, it comes from His divine blueprints.

The good news of success and delights of paradise motivates you to live life fully. The sharp conversations among the angels and the people of hell are effective in knocking sense and stopping us from wretched behaviour. A daily dose of The Majestic Quran especially during the month of Ramadhan will make your day fascinating, your year a precious and weighty and your life much richer.



## My Moral & Spiritual Health Check-Up

Every 12 months we must get an MOT for our car, otherwise we can't drive it.  
Ever had a Moral and Spiritual MOT? Well, here's your chance to have one!

Tick Yes or No for each statement below:	Yes	No
1. I was in the state of Wudu for most of the day.		
2. I prayed the 5 prayers with Jamaat.		
3. I prayed Nawafil prayers e.g. Ishraaq/Awabeen.		
4. I prayed Tahajjud prayer.		
5. Before bed, I recited, Ayat ul Kursi/Surah Mulk.		
6. I read Quran with translation.		
7. I listened to an Islamic speech and read a book.		
8. I didn't interrupt another person during conversation.		
9. I know the Six Kalimas with English translation.		
10. I know Iman-e-Mufassal with English translation.		
11. I know Iman-e-Mujjmal with English translation.		
12. I know the Adhan and the Dua after it.		
13. I prayed to Allah with humility and sincerity at least once.		
14. I used terms in my conversation like; Subhanallah, Alhamdulillah etc.		
15. I spoke to a friend who I had lost touch with.		
16. I controlled my anger and forgave the offender.		
17. I avoided listening to vulgar music.		
18. I avoided looking at haram things.		
19. I spoke the truth and didn't lie.		
20. I didn't backbite or gossip.		

**SCORE:** Excellent (16-20), Good (13-15), Satisfactory (10-12), Poor (9-1)

# EVALUATION OF MY PROGRESS IN RAMADHAN



**D**uring Ramadhan we work hard to become Muttaqi, pious; Patient, learn to be grateful; charitable and generous. It is an intense period of worship, passionate mosque attendance and sense of being on a mission. Ramadhan is indeed a period of moral and spiritual development. Did it turn out as you expected? Well now is the time to evaluate.

Evaluation is making a judgement about the amount, or value of something. It is an assessment of our performance in the month of Ramadhan, how we performed and what we achieved. It's a way of determining what works well and what can be improved in our programme.

Here is a hadith that will help us evaluate our performance in month of Ramadhan. The messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said “[cleanliness is half of faith; the two phrases glory to Allah, all praises for Allah are sufficient to fill what is between heavens and the earth; prayer is light; charity is proof; patience is light; the Quran is either witness for you or against you; and every morning a person sells himself either to become a slave or to become free](#)” (Muslim).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) is using several metaphors, a metaphor is a structure that presents one thing in terms of another. For example, Ahmed is a lion, here you are bringing to the listeners attention to the fact that Ahmed is brave. The messenger (peace be upon him) used metaphors

to bring to our attention the significance of his teachings so he wants us to be clean, prayerful, to give charity, be patient and to be diligent students of the Quran and this is what will guarantee us true freedom otherwise we will be captives and slaves of our passions and egos.

Patience is light, patience enables us to analyse situations beyond their face value. The kindness, the empathetic attitude, the self-control of the patient will make him popular. It gives inner-peace, serenity and calmness and keeps them smiling despite the difficulties. Patience helps to focus on long term results rather than immediate ones. Patience is the mother of all virtues. Patience reduces negative emotions like anger, jealousy and hatred.

Some of the good examples of patient people are like Prophet Yaqub who upon hearing that Yusuf had been killed by the wolf said ‘patience is the best policy’. And he lived in that patient state for decades, the other patient person is the Prophet Ayyub who despite losing his family, home, wealth and health continued to be worshipful.

Patience is a bit like a football substitute who sits at the edges of the football ground waiting for his turn to come on and he watches on, he says I could have tackled that, I could have scored that, I could have taken that but he waits and eventually gets the opportunity.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said “the Quran is either witness for you or a witness against”. So, if you read, study and engage with the Quran and follow its beautiful teachings you will achieve a great deal and this will become your witness on the Day of Judgement but if you disobey and ignore it that will be a witness against you. And the Prophet (peace be upon him) warned “whoever makes the Quran his guide it will take him to paradise and whoever ignores it will end up in Hellfire” (Tabarani).

## THE ESSENCE OF RAMADHAN

*By Jalal-ud-Din Rumi*

Hidden sweetness lies in an empty stomach,  
Man is like a lute, not more not less.

When the lute's stomach is full,  
it cannot lament whether high or low.

When your head and stomach burn with fasting,  
the fire draws lamentation from your breast.

The fire will burn thousands of veils each time  
you ascend a thousand degrees.

On the way and in your ambition,  
keep your stomach empty! Lament like a flute.

Tell God your need! Keep your stomach empty,  
speak of the mysteries like the reed.

When the stomach is full, it calls Satan to you,  
instead of the intellect an idol,  
instead of the Kaaba the devil.

When you fast, qualities of character gather  
around you like servants, slaves and followers.

Continue your fasting, for its Solomon's seal,  
don't give the seal to the devil,  
don't disrupt your kingdom.